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FOCUS ON: COPING WITH TEACHER STRESS

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FOCUS ON: is a series of brief publications developed by the Massachusetts Dissemination Project. Like our RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS booklets, FOCUS ON: presents timely information and resources directed toward a critical educational issue confronting Massachusetts educators. The compact size and limited number of copies printed allow the project to be more responsive and sensitive to the rapidly changing information needs of particular readers.

Please share this issue with colleagues in your school, organization, or department. Additional copies may be obtained free, while supplies last, from the Massachusetts Dissemination Project. Our address is listed on the preceding page.

The project welcomes your comments about this booklet and your suggestions for future issues.

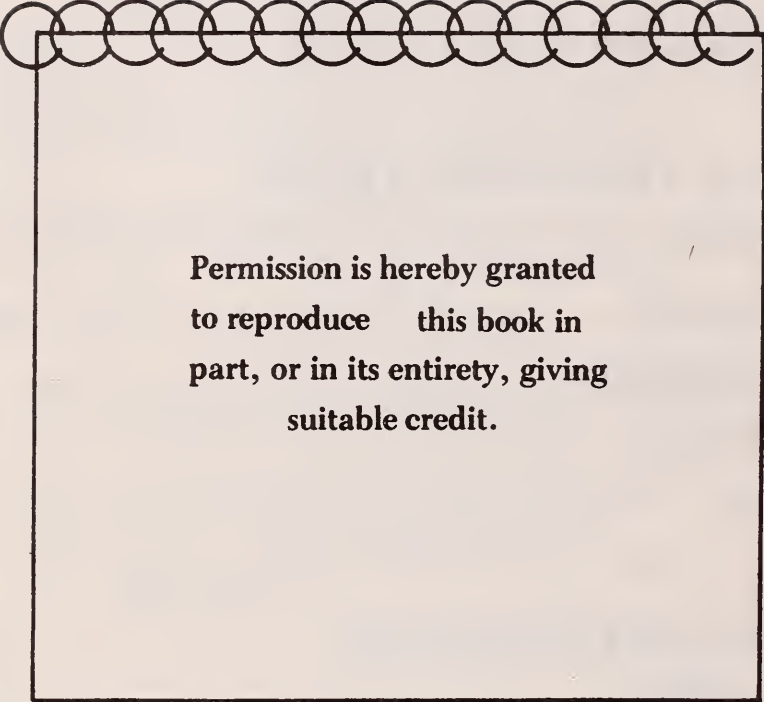
Other publications in this series:

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been prepared for individuals and groups interested in either developing programs to alleviate stress or in pursuing the topic for themselves.

Information was compiled during a 1980 summer internship in the regional office of the United States Department of Education. Initial contact was made with Teacher Centers in the New England states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. Their referrals were supplemented by resources obtained from state departments of education, teacher unions and teacher training programs.

All possible precautions were taken to eliminate resources which would realize private profit from their services. Occasional honorariums might be appropriate to offset out-of-pocket expenses but the main body of these resources are provided free of charge. This does not apply where college credit is extended.

No one compilation of resources on a timely topic such as stress can ever be comprehensive. Omission of any resource in this booklet, therefore, is by oversight rather than by design. Inclusion of any materials or resources does not constitute or imply endorsement by the Massachusetts Dissemination Project or the Massachusetts Department of Education.

The directory is organized alphabetically by state and resource agency. Individuals seeking a program or resource person are advised to identify their state and the closest resource. Telephone numbers are listed for the contact person in each agency.

Thanks to all who appear in the booklet and to those who were willing to share their resources. Special thanks to Dr. Thomas J. Burns, Secretary of Education's Regional Representative, United States Department of Education; Nancy Taylor, United States Department of Education; Dr. Cecilia M. DiBella and Mitzie Kocsis of the Massachusetts Dissemination Project, Massachusetts Department of Education; and Robert C. Gardner, Principal, Old Rochester Regional Junior High School. Their assistance and support made this publication possible.

*Eileen Marland
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April, 1981*



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STRESS IN EDUCATION: PROBLEMS AND PROGNOSIS FOR THE '80s

*None of us can help the things life has done to us.
They're done before you realize it, and once they're done
they make you do other things until at last everything
comes between you and what you'd like to be, and you have
lost your true self forever.*

Eugene O'Neill

It is entirely possible that O'Neill, in a typically pessimistic mood, has identified the source of frustration for legions of educators confronted with the impasse labeled "teacher stress" or "burnout". What is this condition? - and why has it achieved prominence as a major topic for keynote presentations at recent national educational conventions?

"Stress" and "burnout" have been labeled the new psychological malady sweeping through America's public schools. The problem of stress, however, under the guise of teacher job-satisfaction has been identified for some time (Lolis, 1962). The term "stress," borrowed from the literature of physics and engineering, indicates the effect of strain on material. "Stress is part of life," asserts Dr. Hans Selye (1956), the world's leading authority on stress, "It is a natural by-product of all our activities."

The study of stress as it relates to any occupation involves many complexities, including physiological predisposition, childhood expectations, and personality and social supports such as family, friends and colleagues. The term occupational stress appeared in the early 1970's. Researchers, however, were quick to note that stress disproportionately strikes people in the helping professions such as teachers. Professional educators have always recognized that teaching is a demanding and often stressful job. In 1977 the *Chicago Tribune* concluded that public school teaching is among the most stressful occupations in the United States.

Research on job satisfaction, later found to be directly related to levels of stress, initially concentrated on private industry. The work of Maslow and Herzberg dominated the field during the 1950's and 1960's. Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs remains a cornerstone in the area of job satisfaction although empirical inconsistencies related to his theory of self-actualization reduced his credibility. Herzberg's contribution to research on job satisfaction supports the theory that people tend to internalize

favorable results but blame others or externalize dissatisfaction or unfavorable results.

Initial studies on teacher job satisfaction focused on turnover (Hedlund and Brown, 1951.) and morale (Gubser, 1969 and Ehresman, 1969). Evans (1967) advocated dynamic programs of continuous learning to prevent or remedy "dead" faculty.

Recent studies relate teacher job satisfaction to other school areas. Bergeth (1970) noted that the level of teacher job satisfaction is one of the most significant determinants of the school's social climate. Perhaps stemming from this finding, Sergiovanni (1975) urged school administrators to give high priority to maintaining a highly motivated teaching staff. In recent years, then, the significance of teacher satisfaction or the total school environment has been repeatedly emphasized. Armed with this understanding, it is important to recognize those factors which contribute to job dissatisfaction and stress in order to effectively address and remedy them.

What Symptoms or Behaviors Reflect Teacher Stress or Burnout?

Prolonged or excessive tardiness or absences, ideosyncratic behaviors, and the acknowledgment of genuine school-related apprehensions are typical warning signs of stress and impending burnout. Lortie (1975) noted that teachers and others involved in helping professions, feeling a sense of personal failure in their jobs, conceal their problem of occupational stress. The teacher, once a symbol of consistency, competence and stability in the community, is now a controversial figure. Efforts to secure higher salaries, better working conditions and a more productive teaching-learning environment have eroded community support for teachers. In many cases, the quest for improved salaries and working conditions have resulted in teacher strikes with slow-healing wounds. Meanwhile, declining college board scores and growing public apprehension about students' mastery of "basic skills" stimulated a national inquiry about teacher competence. These national and local concerns have produced growing teacher retrenchment and defensiveness, all of which intensify stress symptoms.

What Are Some of the Effects of Teacher Stress or Burnout?

Recent studies reveal that stress is harmful to both the individuals under stress and to all who come in contact with them. Maslach and his colleagues at the University of California concluded that constant involvement with people and their problems by professionals in human service fields can lead to cynicism and the eventual loss of caring. Caring, of course, is an essential characteristic of successful teaching. Their findings also reveal that a variety of negative

effects often accompany the emotional, physical, and attitudinal breakdown experienced by stress-ridden individuals. Thus, while stress can be physically harmful to the individual, it can be psychologically harmful to others. Lortie (1975) and Magoon (1979) concluded that teacher morale, enthusiasm, job satisfaction, instructional leadership and effective classroom management are all significant factors in the learning process --- the major domain of the teacher.

What Attempts Have Been Made to Better Understand and Address the Problem of Stress?

The National Institute of Education, responding to concerns about declining student achievement and teacher accountability, funded the first research project on stress in Chicago. This study, initially funded in 1977, provided quantitative data on the magnitude of the problem, the extent of various background and situational characteristics, and made policy recommendations.

Beginning in 1979, several state-level teacher associations in Massachusetts, New York, and Washington, conducted their own surveys and research projects on stress. There were many reasons for teacher associations to pursue their own studies: to increase their understanding and awareness of what is happening to classroom teachers; to accurately respond to the media, to state legislatures and state departments of education; and to develop a pro-active stance to counteract charges that teachers are to blame for all the problems in today's schools.

Higher education and governmental agencies have acknowledged the problems of stress and made appropriate responses. Colleges and universities now offer courses and seminars on stress. Federal and state agencies have supported studies and activities that identify and address factors contributing to teacher stress. Funding of the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education by the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare was of a more long-term significance. This group developed a seventy-page report that outlined teacher-designed reform of in-service education. Many of the recommendations contained in the report were incorporated into the legislation that authorized federally funded teacher centers in 1976. A primary function of these centers is the design and development of in-service programs by teachers to meet their own needs.

What Approach Seems to Have the Best Chance of Success?

As early as 1944, the American Association of School Administrators recommended teacher in-service education as a way to improve the morale of teachers who were "feeling drab." This was the first

documented connection between teacher stress and potential remediation through appropriate in-service instruction. Programs in teacher centers and other participant-planned activities appear to best address teacher needs since practitioners are so intensely involved in the design of the activity.

What Is the Present Status of Stress and Burnout in Education?

The prognosis for stress and burnout is neither optimistic nor encouraging. The number of stress-inducing elements in society appears to be multiplying during the 1980's. Moreover, as national budgetary priorities reduce federal aid to education and as financial constraints on the local level threaten reductions in school programs and personnel, teacher stress will continue unabated.

Education must follow the lead of other professions that have been beset by developing training programs and activities to counteract these forces. Unlike stress itself, the management of stress can be a constructive, energizing, and renewing force for educators and all human service professionals.

RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS

CONNECTICUT

AREA COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (ACES)
800 Dixwell Avenue
New Haven, CT 06511
Tel. (203) 562-9967

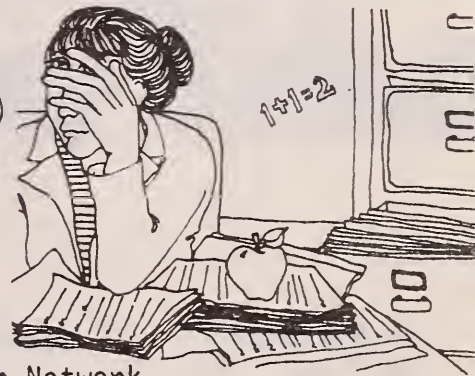
Contact: Dee Speese

Target Group: Educators on all levels
Workshop Focus: Stress and Burnout
Duration: One session (1-3 hours)

This workshop helps educators to explore and identify stress symptoms, and develop skills to cope with sources of stress. Participants are offered assistance in developing effective time management techniques and in other areas which lead to renewed job satisfaction.

CAPITOL REGION EDUCATION COUNCIL (CREC)
Staff Development Center
212 King Philip Drive
West Hartford, CT 06117
Tel. (203) 522-6137

Contact: Charles R. Haller
Director of Staff Development, and
Coordinator, Connecticut Teacher Center Network



Target Group: K-12 teachers
Workshop Focus: Causes of Stress
Duration: One day

CREC is an educational service center serving thirty-nine towns in central Connecticut. The Center has formed professional support groups that help teachers deal with stress and other issues. Workshop offerings concentrate on coping with stressful situations. The Center has been very successful with support groups for teachers of gifted and talented students.



TEACHERS' CENTER AT FAIRFIELD, INC.
1561 North Benson Road
Fairfield, CT 06430
Tel. (203) 255-5411

Contact: Bena Kallick, Director
Joanna Nicholson, Coordinator



Target Group: K-12 teachers

Duration: See Below

The Center offers several types of activities to help teachers deal with stress and renewal. Bena Kallick's workshop, *Observing, Recording, and Evaluating* helps the teacher observe him or herself in relation to teaching. For example, participants explore the wealth of personal knowledge accumulated over the years and think about teaching as a personal investigation for oneself and others.

Joanna Nicholson developed a week-long series of workshops entitled "Renewal 1980 for Educators" which offered twenty-five, three credit graduate workshops at Fairfield University. Topics ranged from social studies or special education areas to poetry, writing, and human relations. Workshops focused on rebuilding teacher confidence, renewing commitment and redirecting capabilities.

MASSACHUSETTS

BOSTON CENTER FOR ADULT EDUCATION
5 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02115
Tel. (617) 267-4430

Contact: Phyllis Adelberg, Co-Director
Civic Center and Clearinghouse, Inc.
Tel. (617) 227-1762

Target Group: K-12 teachers and all staff
Workshop Focus: Career Change
Duration: One day

New Careers for Teachers acquaints practitioners with jobs, careers, and business opportunities outside education. Activities are designed to help participants make informed career choices based on matching individual interests and skills with the job market.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
Sargent College of Allied Health Professions
University Road
Boston, MA 02215
Tel. (617) 353-2700

Contact: Jennifer Caputo
LeRoy Spaniol

Target Group: All staff and administrators
Workshop Focus: Stress and Burnout
Duration: Six hours



The identification, treatment and prevention of the causes and sources of stress and burnout are the major objectives of this workshop. A series of exercises makes participants more aware of their own signs and symptoms of stress and burnout. Role plays and small groups provide opportunities for developing alternative behaviors to deal with stress and burnout.

BUNKER HILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Rutherford Avenue
Charlestown, MA 02129
Tel. (617) 241-8600

Contact: Phyllis Adelberg (see pg.9)

Target Group: Women educators on all levels
Workshop Focus: Career Change
Duration: Varied



"Project Reentry" is an internship program for women educators who want to explore or expand their career options. Intensive career counseling is offered in addition to internships or apprenticeships in fields selected by the participants.

EDCO, INC. (EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE FOR GREATER BOSTON)
20 Kent Street
Brookline, MA 02146
Tel. (617) 734-5600

Contact: Jan Holmes
Judith Opert Sandler
Sue Singer

Target Group: K-12 teachers
Workshop Focus: Teacher Burnout and Revitalization

The Edco Teachers' Institute offers various programs, conferences, seminars, workshops, and support groups. Typical offerings cover skill assessment, transference of teaching skills, the burnout continuum, revitalization, career opportunities in and outside education, and resume preparation.

HAMPSHIRE EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE (HEC)
58 Pleasant Street
Northampton, MA 01060
Tel. (413) 586-4590

Contact: Philip Clarkson, Marilyn Singer, or
Leo Vigneault, either at HEC or
Amherst-Pelham Regional School Department
Tel. (413) 549-3690

Target Group: All staff K-12
Workshop Focus: Managing Stress
Duration: One session

Effective Management of Stress uses a problem-solving approach

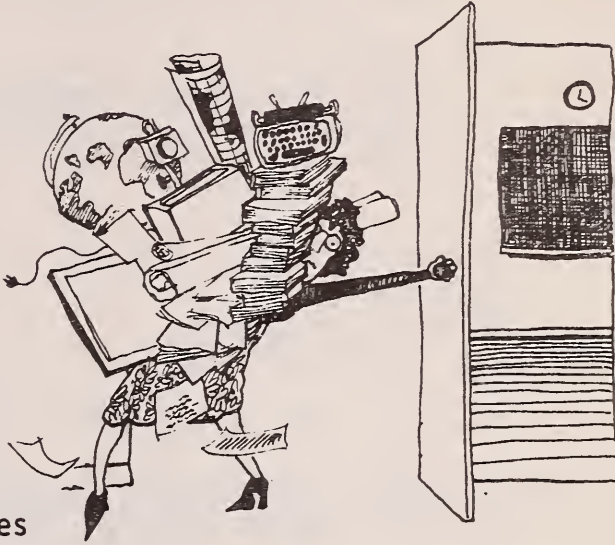
that includes defining the problem, brainstorming possible solutions, evaluating options, developing an action plan, committing oneself to the plan, and evaluating the plan.

LESLEY COLLEGE
29 Everett Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel. (617) 868-9600

Contact: Charles S. Clayman

Target Group: All staff K-12
Workshop Focus: Managing Stress
Duration: Six-nine hours

This workshop helps teachers identify and examine personal, interpersonal, and organizational sources of stress. Participants explore their own communication, leadership, and conflict management styles. "Learning Appreciation Projects" (LAPs) prepare participants to apply workshop concepts in their own work settings. Support groups also help participants to clarify and learn from their experiences.



MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (MTA)
20 Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108
Tel. (617) 742-7950

Contact: Fred Andelman

Target Group: Statewide membership

Four programs are available to all local associations or individual members. These programs are offered statewide through their five regional offices.

1. The Office of Professional Development conducts workshops and seminars in areas of immediate concern to teachers. Examples are stress, burnout, and retraining.
2. PGEI (Post Graduate Educational Instruction) develops workshops and courses on a given theme. A steering committee of teachers helps identify areas of concern. Once identified, a teachers' planning committee, with expertise in the area, develops presentations stressing new techniques and activities.

3. MTA/Fitchburg State College Program offers individualized learning opportunities leading to a degree. Content can be school or system specific, or regionally determined.
4. The MTA works with teacher groups to help them design staff development programs and ease relationships between teachers and their school districts. They also offer consulting services which aid in proposal preparation.

McLEAN INSTITUTE FOR SCHOOL CONSULTATION
P.O. Box 8
Belmont, MA 02178
Tel. (617) 855-2487

Contact: Jean K. Mason

Target Group: K-12 teachers, counselors, social workers,
administrators, school psychologists

The Institute offers two courses that deal with stress in school settings. *Stress and the Teacher* helps teachers identify sources of stress in their own professional lives and provides the setting for the beginning of a mutual support group. The course presents a sampling of the literature on stress and offers opportunities for participants to analyze their personal experiences. *Improving Working Relationships in a School Setting* and *Managing the Process of Change* examine case studies and relevant theories that present a favorable school climate necessary for increased staff effectiveness.

MERRIMACK EDUCATION CENTER
101 Mill Road
Chelmsford, MA 01824
Tel. (617) 256-3985

Contact: Paula Robbins, Associate Director of Graduate Studies
Fitchburg State College, Tel. (617) 345-2151 x141

Target Group: K-12 teachers
Workshop Focus: Career Change

This workshop explores critical issues and skills related to career change. Group exercises focus on identifying skills and interests, examining alternative careers that maximize those talents, ways of acquiring information about new careers or training opportunities, conducting a job search, writing



a resume, and interviewing techniques. A unique "shadow internship" offers participants an opportunity to study a particular job in business or industry on site.

NANTUCKET LEARNING AND RESOURCE CENTER
P.O. Box 1461
Nantucket, MA 02554
Tel. (617) 228-4612

Contact: Anne MacLennan

Target Group: Open to all employees of the school system
Workshop Focus: Managing Stress
Duration: One, two and one-half hour session

This workshop begins by defining stress and distress as a means of helping participants set their own personal goals. A series of exercises and a stress inventory assist participants in establishing their own guidelines for a low-stress lifestyle.

NORTH SHORE EDUCATION CENTER
Box 94
Beverly, MA 01915
Tel. (617) 922-0071

Contact: Joel Grossman, Program Director

Target Group: K-12 teachers and administrators
Workshop Focus: Stress Reduction
Duration: One, six hour presentation



The *Relaxation Response Workshop* is designed to reduce anxiety, tension, and stress through a four-step process of preparation, awareness, choice, and action. Relaxation programs are developed to suit individual needs, personality, and life style.

PROJECT ERR (EDUCATIONAL REDIRECTION AND RECYCLING)
Lakeville State Hospital
P.O. Box 29
Middleboro, MA 02346
Tel. (617) 947-1951

Contact: Robert L. Frazer

Target Group: K-12 teachers, administrators, school committee members
Workshop Focus: Stress Reduction
Duration: One, 45-90 minute session

The Educator and Stress is designed to identify and discuss job related causes of stress and distress in educational settings. Participants learn and practice simple stress reduction techniques that can be used on the job.

PROJECT INTERSERV
Attleboro High School
Attleboro, MA 02703
Tel. (617) 222-5150 x196

Contact: Marianne McAllister, Director

Target Group: K-12 teachers and administrators
Workshop Focus: Classroom Climate and Stress

Project Interserv offers two workshops that address stress in the classroom. Patricia Mosley presents a three-hour workshop that offers practical suggestions for handling stress produced by the interpersonal dynamics within the daily confines of the classroom. The connection between stress and discipline techniques is also discussed. *Handling Stress* includes a film presentation, mini-lectures and group exercises designed to develop a positive, coping attitude toward stressful situations. Bart O'Connor's *Mental Health and Classroom Climate* is a three-session, four and one-half hour workshop that examines stress-producing factors in the classroom and presents techniques to improve classroom climate. Activities help participants assess their own classrooms in relation to stress signals, physical environment, interpersonal relationships, and group dynamics. The influence of classroom climate on the learner is also discussed.

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE
Physical Education Department
263 Alden Street
Springfield, MA 01109
Tel. (413) 787-2043

Contact: John Neumann,
Associate Professor

Target Group: K-12 teachers,
supervisors and
administrators
Workshop Focus: Stress Management

This workshop helps the individual recognize and assess personal and work-related sources and signs of stress and tension; and presents various behavioral and physical techniques to use



in dealing with stress. Overall, the workshop focuses on the impact of one's lifestyle and the development of sound practices and positive attitudes to alleviate stress.

T.R.Y. (TEACHER REJUVENATION YEAR)
Old Rochester Regional High School
Marion Road
Mattapoisett, MA 02738
Tel. (617) 758-4928

Contact: Eileen Marland

Target Group: Junior and senior high school teachers
Workshop Focus: School Climate, Teacher Renewal
Duration: Fifteen, two and one-half hour sessions

This workshop series aims to improve student-teacher relationships and school climate. Activities help teachers assess their strengths and weaknesses leading to enhanced personal and professional growth and development.



NEW HAMPSHIRE

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
Education Department
Merrill Hall
Durham, NH 03824
Tel. (603) 862-2310

Contact: Richard L. Schwab

Target Group: K-12 teachers and administrators

Workshop Focus: Burnout

Duration: Varied

This workshop takes a multi-faceted approach to the problem of teacher burnout. It begins by defining the problem, explores the personal, societal, and organizational sources of burnout, and discusses remedies such as effective time management techniques. Career alternatives are also discussed.



RHODE ISLAND

RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE
Providence, RI 02908
Tel. (401) 456-8266

Contact: Dr. J.L. Larsen

Target Group: K-12 supervisors, and administrators
Duration: Eight, three hour sessions

Leadership, Management and Coping with Stress examines the relationship between the management of people and the management of stress through a series of lectures, role plays, simulations, and discussions. Participants are granted one incentive-training credit upon completing the course.

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
Office of Counseling and Student Development
219 Roosevelt Hall
Kingston, RI 02881
Tel. (401) 792-2288

Contact: J. Eugene Knott

Target Group: K-12 teachers
Workshop Focus: Stress Management
Duration: One, two or three hour workshop session or
full course for credit



Stress and Education: Coping with Stress and Anxiety focuses on both cognitive and physical techniques and strategies for managing stress in educational settings. Participants are trained to identify sources of stress and anxiety in their own particular setting.

VERMONT

BURLINGTON FOLLOW THROUGH
Wheeler School
Archibald and Spring Street
Burlington, VT 05401
Tel. (802) 863-4521 x365

Contact: Meredith P. Kimball



Target Group: K-12 teachers, administrators and staff
Workshop Focus: Stress Management
Duration: Flexible

This workshop has three components. The first segment examines the nature of stress, the stress-prone personality, the stress response in individuals and groups, the physiological and emotional results of prolonged unmanaged stress, and the ingredients of an effective stress management program. Next, a series of exercises and a "Self Care Inventory" help participants identify personal sources of stress leading to the development of an individualized de-stressing plan. The third and final segment introduces participants to various stress relaxation techniques such as group support systems, and visual imagery.

GODDARD COLLEGE
The Teachers' Center
Plainfield, VT 05667
Tel. (802) 454-8311

Contact: Boffey Barnes

Target Group: K-12 Teachers' Center project area school staff
Workshop Focus: Burnout
Duration: Four and one-half hours

This workshop follows a basic problem-solving model; definition of the problem, examination of possible solutions, and selection of a solution. The techniques of reality therapy are emphasized.

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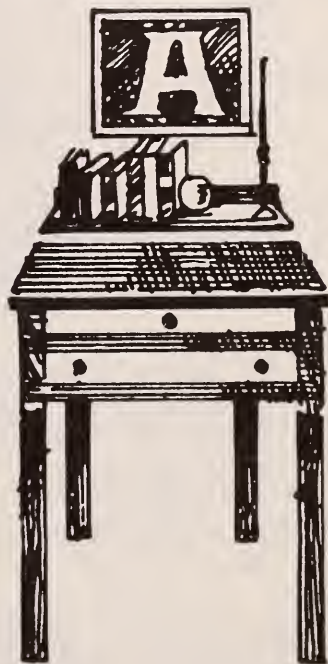
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